星の国

Kingdom of Stars

四季賞

4 Seasons Award

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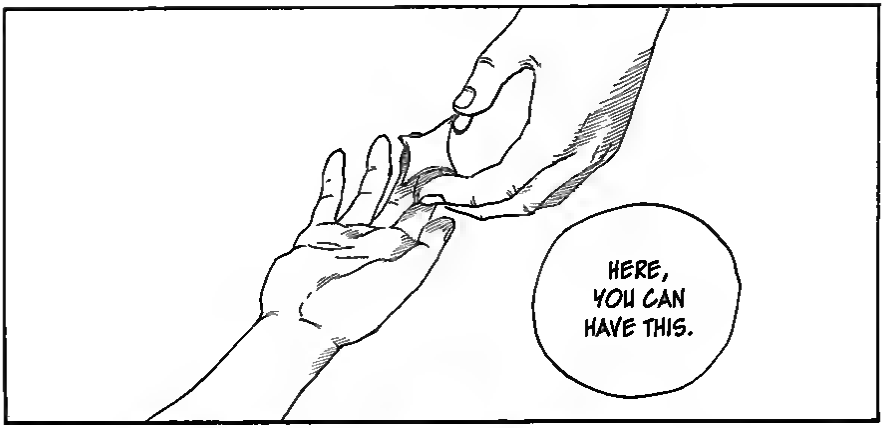
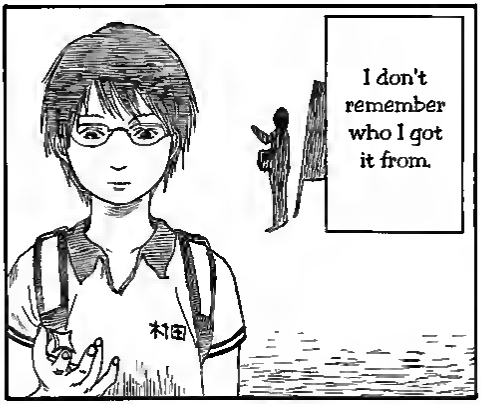
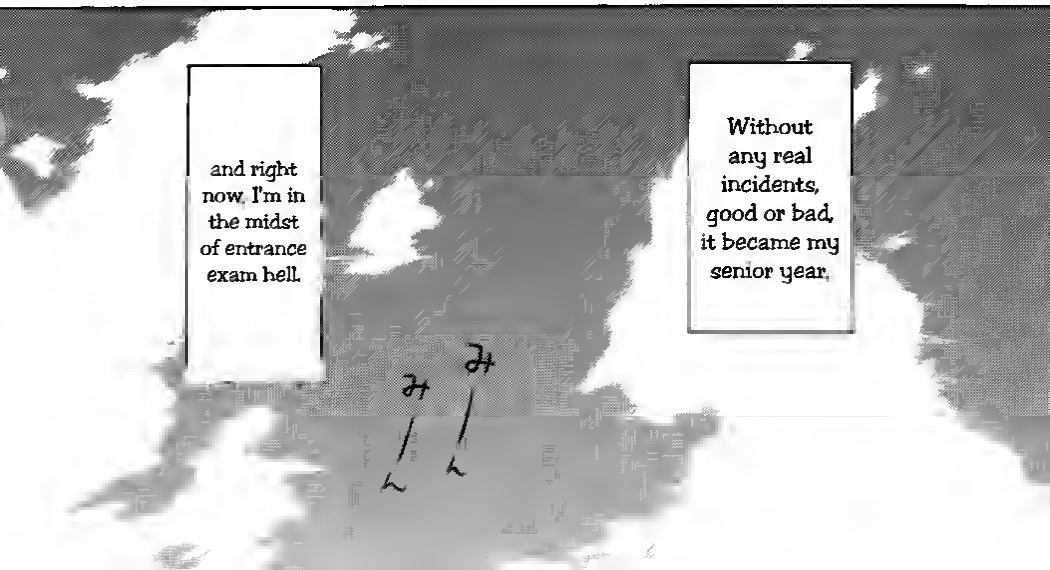
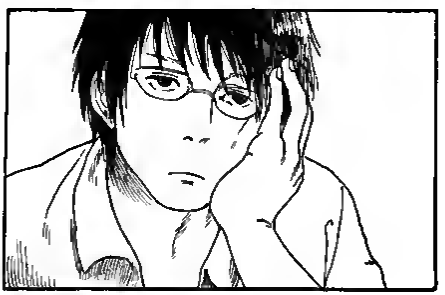
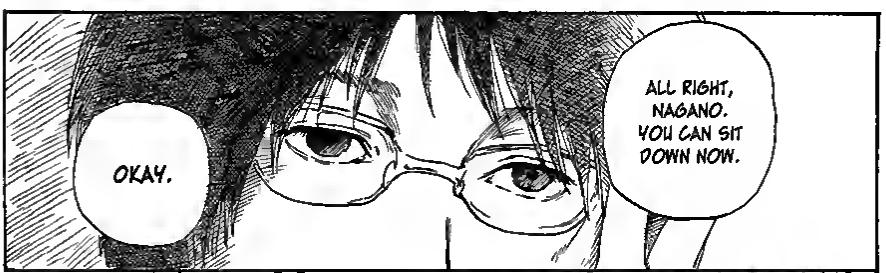

HERE, YOU CAN HAVE THIS.

So I've kept it with me ever since
I just happened to have it when I passed my high school entrance exam and attributed my success to it.
OH-

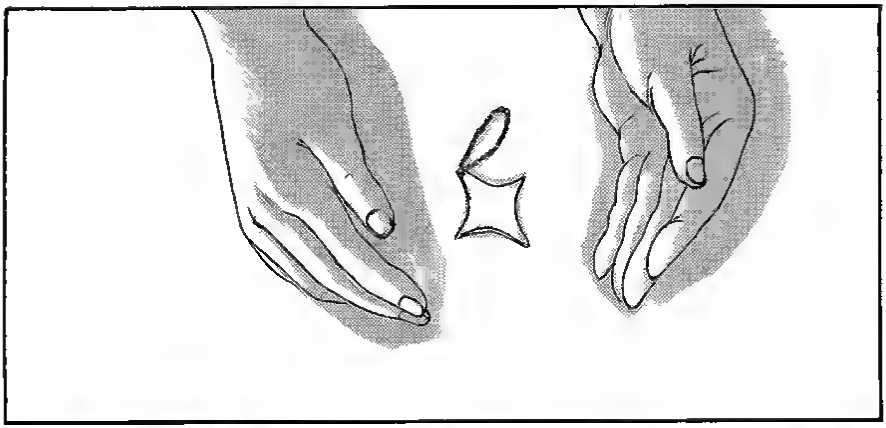

I don't remember who I got it from.


and right now, I'm in the midst of entrance exam hell.
Without any real incidents, good or bad, it became my senior year.

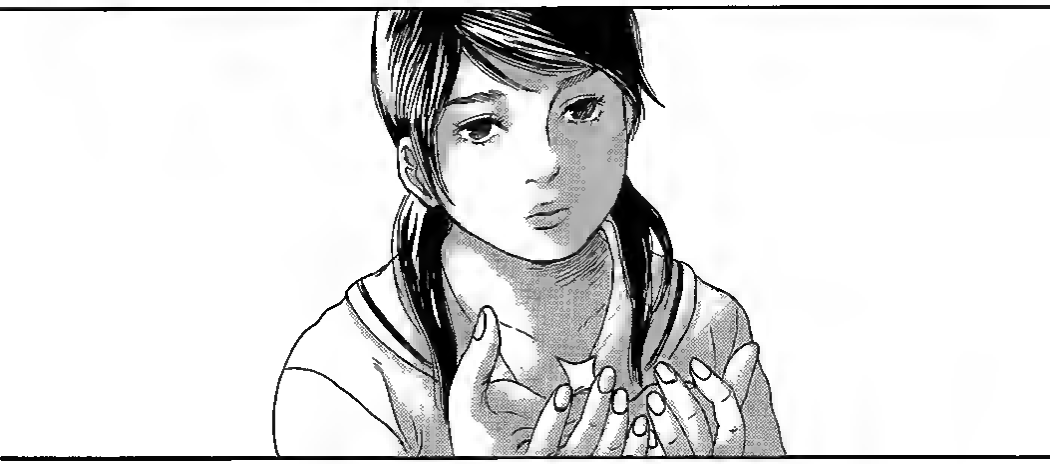




Source 2001 National center for University Admissions test

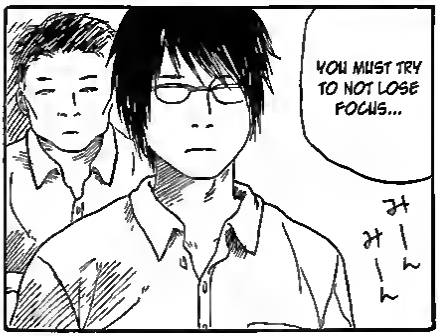


UM...



O... OH, THAT'S MY...
. . AHHH.
IS THIS YOURS?
...! NAGANO-SAN
I DROPPED IT, HUH? THANKS! WELL, GOTTA GO!
はっ
ホー

COME TO THINK OF IT, EVER SINCE I GOT INTO HIGH SCHOOL I'VE HELD ON TO IT. SOMEHOW...
THANKS TO THIS, I WAS PRETTY LUCKY TODAY.
BUT, TODAY...
THERE WASN'T REALLY ANY BENEFIT IN KEEPING IT AFTER THAT, THOUGH.
I SHOULD PROBABLY STUDY.
.....
SHE HANDED IT BACK TO ME WITH BOTH HER HANDS AS IF IT WERE REALLY IMPORTANT.
COULD IT BE THAT SHE HAS A THING FOR ME!?


YOU MUST TRY TO NOT LOSE FOCUS...
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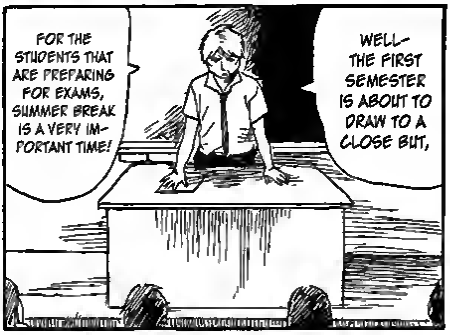
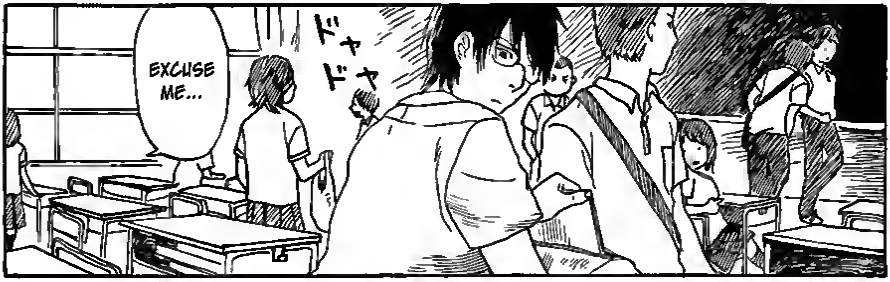
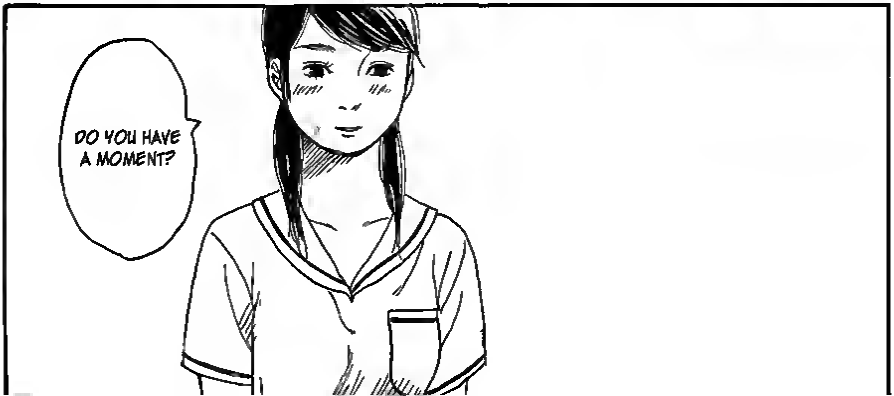
みーーん


WELL- THE FIRST SEMESTER IS ABOUT TO DRAW TO A CLOSE BUT,
FOR THE STUDENTS THAT ARE PREPARING FOR EXAMS, SUMMER BREAK IS A VERY IMPORTANT TIME!


EXCUSE ME...
ドヤドヤ


DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?

C-C-C-COULD THIS REALLY... REALLY BE ..!!
T... T... THIS IS...
そそそそ
W... WHAT IS IT? COMING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.
AH!
SEE...!
PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
YOU MUST ALSO BE A FOLLOWER OF "MELITA-SAMA!"
I'VE FINALLY FOUND A COMRADE

EH?
THIS BRAND OF MELITA-SAMA IS EVIDENCE ENOUGH. COME, LET US RECITE THE WORDS OF OUR TEACHER ENGRAVED BY THIS BRAND, "WHEN THE FATED TIME APPROACHES, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF OUR GLORIOUS GOD MELITA, WE SHALL ASCEND TO THE KINGDOM OF ABSOLUTE TRUTH BEYOND THE STARS. THAT IS THE KINGDOM OF STARS
AH... TO BE ABLE TO MEET ANOTHER COMRADE AT THIS SMALL SCHOOL, I GIVE THANKS TO GOD AND MY TEACHER
WHERE ARE YOU HEADED? COMRADE!
WHA- AH I HAVE SOME ERRANDS MY PARENTS ASKED ME TO DO...

THIS... IS WHAT THEY CALL, "THAT," RIGHT?
IS SHE TRYING TO CONVERT ME? OR DOES SHE THINK I'M THE SAME AS HER?
IT WILL BE FINE! IF YOU EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, YOUR PARENTS WILL SURELY UNDERSTAND!
ニッコリ
YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER MUST ALSO BE FOLLOWING THE PATH AS FERVENT BELIEVERS!
IF I DON'T HURRY UP AND GET OUT OF HERE...
I HAVE THE WORDS OF OUR TEACHER HERE
To think that my first exchange with her would be like this.
Although I believed as a freshman that I would have no chance of talking to this girl whose grades were at the top of the class and was considered out of reach...
I DON'T KNOW WHO THE HELL MELI-WHATEVER-SAMA IS. I JUST GOT THIS FROM SOMEONE, THAT'S ALL!
G... GET REAL!
COME ON, LET'S READ THE GOOD BOOK TOGETHER.

AH... I WENT OVERBOARD...
はあ！
はあ：

MY FAMILY'S BEEN REGULAR BUDDHISTS FOR GENERATIONS!
YOU'VE GOT IT TWISTED, DON'T GET ME INVOLVED IN SOME WEIRD RELIGION, YOU IDIOT!

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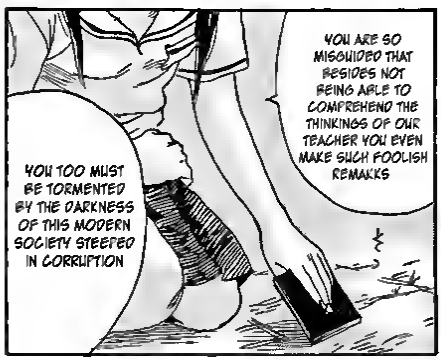
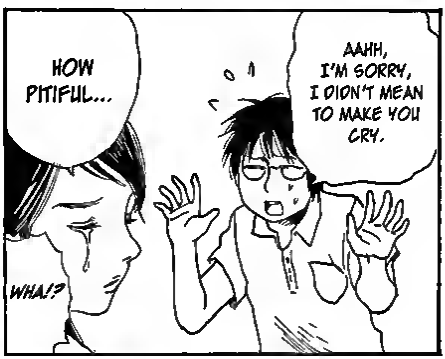
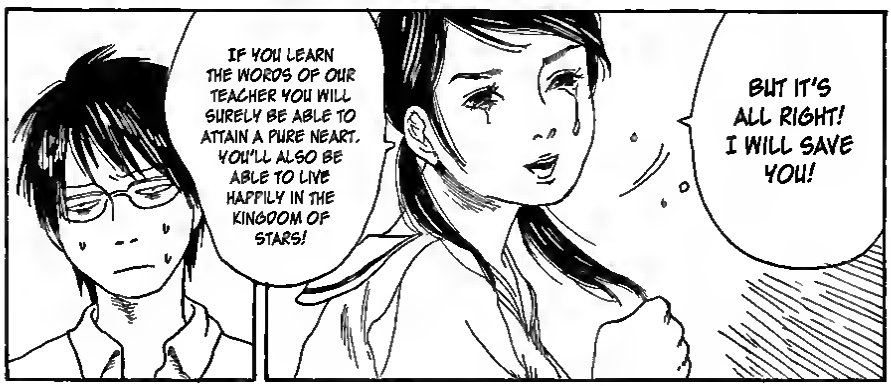
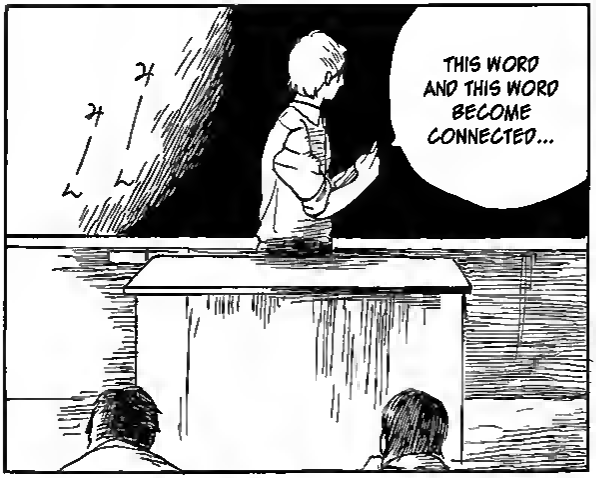

YOU ARE SO MISGUIDED THAT BESIDES NOT BEING ABLE TO COMPREHEND THE THINKINGS OF OUR TEACHER YOU EVEN MAKE SUCH FOOLISH REMARKS
YOU TOO MUST BE TORMENTED BY THE DARKNESS OF THIS MODERN SOCIETY STEEPED IN CORRUPTION


AAHH, I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU CRY.
HOW PITIFUL...
WHA!?

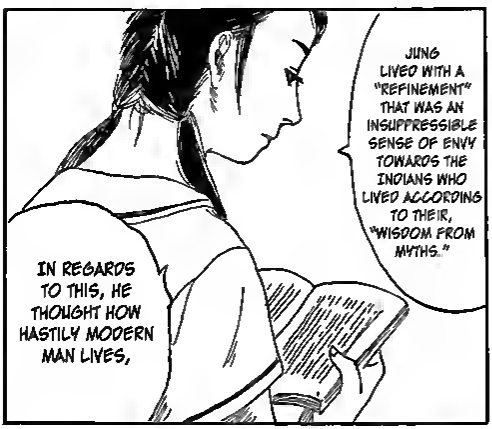

IF YOU LEARN THE WORDS OF OUR TEACHER YOU WILL SURELY BE ABLE TO ATTAIN A PURE HEART. YOU'LL ALSO BE ABLE TO LIVE HAPPILY IN THE KINGDOM OF STARS!
BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT! I WILL SAVE YOU!

AH...
In the end, that day passed by...
WHAT SORT OF NONSENSE ARE YOU SPOUTING...?
HAPPILY IN THE KINGDOM OF STARS...
NAGANO-SAN TURNED OUT TO BE THAT KINDA PERSON...
WHAT A SHOCK...
I SHOULD THROW THIS OUT WHILE I'M AT IT...
WE'VE GOTTA PASS THIS RIDICULOUS ENTRANCE EXAM WAR. THERE'S NO TOMORROW!
WE'RE EXAM STUDENTS! WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT BULLSHIT!

WHAT'S UP, YOU DON'T SEEM TOO HOT.
AH- MORNING...
OH- MORNIN'.
I DIDN'T GET THAT MUCH SLEEP YESTER- DAY...
HAHAHA- WHAT WERE YOU UP TO?
YOU AFTER NAGANO? DON'T BOTHER.
IDIOT, WHAT ARE YOU...
SHE'S IGNORING ME?


THIS WORD AND THIS WORD BECOME CONNECTED...

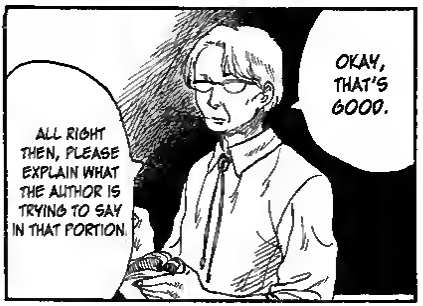
... AND SO, THEREFORE,


JUNG LIVED WITH A "REFINEMENT" THAT WAS AN INSUPPRESSIBLE SENSE OF ENVY TOWARDS THE INDIANS WHO LIVED ACCORDING TO THEIR, "WISDOM FROM MYTHS."
IN REGARDS TO THIS, HE THOUGHT HOW HASTILY MODERN MAN LIVES,

NAGANO!
YES.
PLEASE READ ALOUD THE SENTENCES AFTER LINE 8.

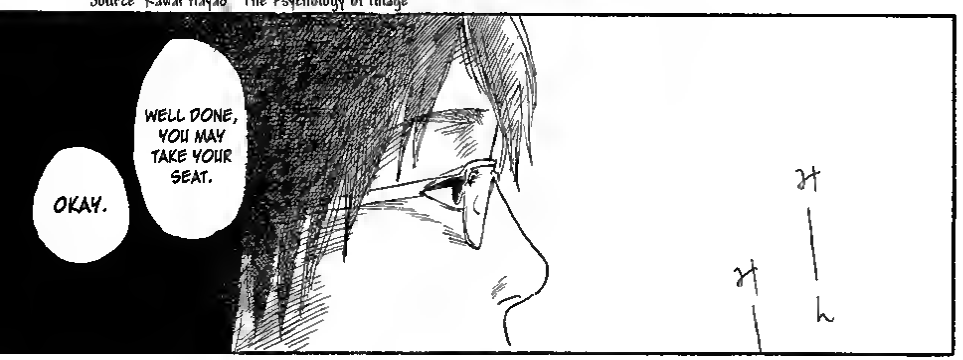
MODERN MAN LIVES ABUNDANT IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE AND YET EXCEEDINGLY POOR IN THEIR SPIRITUALITY.
SO MUCH SO THAT WHEN THE INDIANS PRESENT AN "EXPLANATION" OF THEIR WISDOM FROM MYTH OF HOW THE SUN REVOLVES, WE MAY REGARD THIS WITH LAUGHTER AT THEIR NAIVETY.

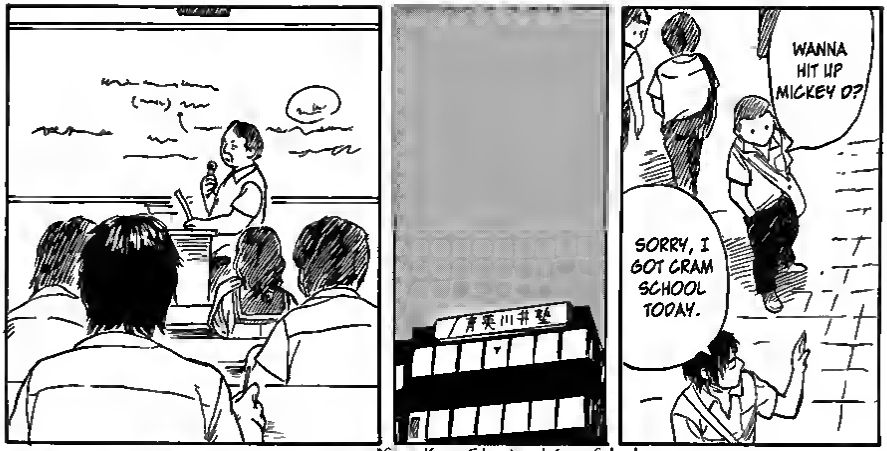
COULD NOT BUT AVOID EKING OUT AN IMPOVERISHED AND HASTY LIFE.
... AND THIS, IN A SIMILAR MANNER, FOR THE PURPOSES OF HOW WE VIEW OURSELVES AND THE WORLD, MODERN MAN, JUST AS JUNG POINTED OUT,



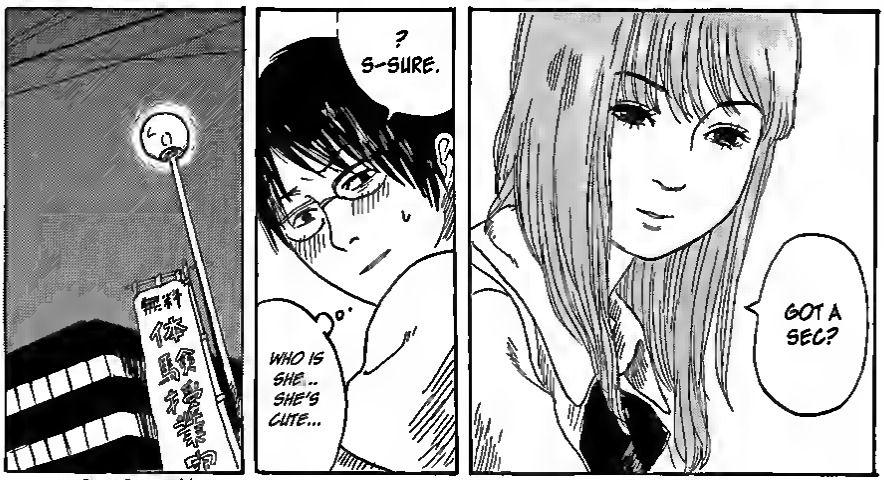
I GET THE IMPRESSION AS IF THE AUTHOR IS SAYING THAT WE SHOULD ALL EACH CREATE OUR OWN WORLD VIEW.
CONSIDERING ONCE MORE THE DIGNITY AND VALUE OF THE HUMAN RACE.

Source Kawai Hayao "The Psychology of Image"





*Sign: Kawai Educational Cram School

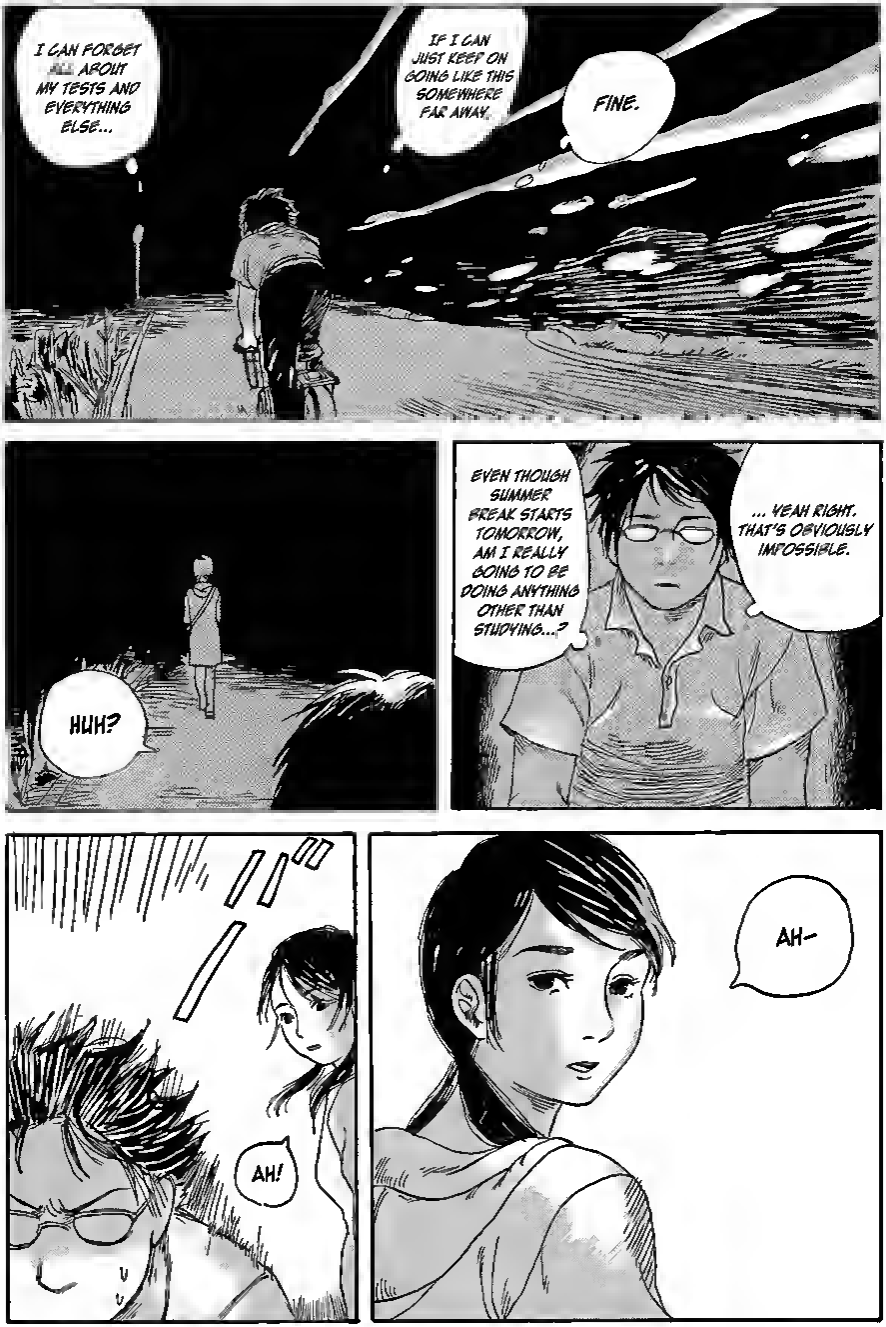


Sign: Free trial lessons

WOULD YOU GO OUT WITH ME?
A GIRL AS CUTE AS HER...!!
I'VE HAD A CRUSH ON YOU FOR A WHILE AND,
WELL, SUMMER COURSES ARE GONNA START SOON, RIGHT? AFTER THAT WE'LL ALL BE STUDYING, RIGHT?
A DREAM... THIS IS A DREAM, ISN'T IT?
AH, I'M SORRY, I MUST'VE SURPRISED YOU WITH HOW SUDDEN IT WAS.
I'M IIO MIKA FROM NISHI HIGHSCHOOL.
WHAT DO YOU THINK...
... MURATA-KUN?
I THOUGHT SHE WAS GONNA TRY TO CONVERT ME OR SOMETHING...
SO I THOUGHT, LIKE, BEFORE THAT, WHY NOT GIVE IT A SHOT CAUSE WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE

WH-
SORRY.
S...
WHAT!? DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE ELSE YOU LIKE!?
DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY YOU HAD NOTHING TO LOSE...
Well... that's true, but...
WHYYY-!? WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT ME!?
IS IT BECAUSE WE'VE NEVER TALKED!? ISN'T IT FINE IF WE JUST GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER FROM NOW!!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...
NOW ABOUT YOU MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
WHA-

I SHOULD GO HOME.
What's with that guy? Getting all pissed off!
Yeah!
Her boyfriend!
We're so sorry.
Poor Mika-
Yeah!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, YOU POOP HEAD!
ミシャ
ETOPEC
W... WELL SHE WAS JUST CONFESSING TO ME ON A WHIM.
WE'VE NEVER EVEN TALKED AND SHE SAYS SHE LIKES ME?
WHY'D I TURN HER DOWN?
My head feels like muck.
.....
ニハヤ
WHACK


I CAN FORGET ALL ABOUT MY TESTS AND EVERYTHING ELSE...
IF I CAN JUST KEEP ON GOING LIKE THIS SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.
FINE.
HUH?
EVEN THOUGH SUMMER BREAK STARTS TOMORROW, AM I REALLY GOING TO BE DOING ANYTHING OTHER THAN STUDYING...?
... YEAH RIGHT. THAT'S OBVIOUSLY IMPOSSIBLE.
AH!
AH-

FINE, DON'T FOLLOW ME.
IF IT'S ABOUT YESTERDAY, I APOLOGIZE. I SAID TOO MUCH TOO SOON AT THE START.
PLEASE WAIT A SECOND.
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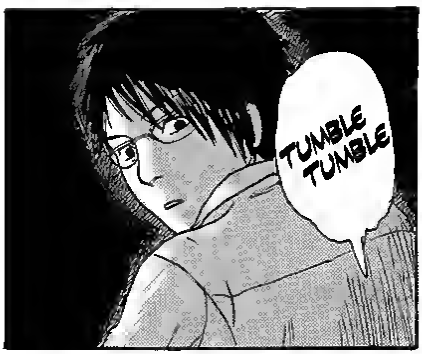
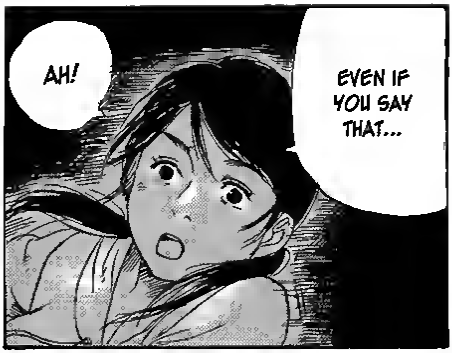

TUMBLE TUMBLE


AH!
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT...

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?
I SPRAINED MY FOOT.

AH...
OUCH...

SORRY.
. . .
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT'S MY FAULT ANYWAYS.
キーコ
キーコ
OH! I WAS ON THE WAY HOME FROM A MEETING.
Meeting
CRAM SCHOOL.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WERE YOU GOING SOMEWHERE TODAY?
MEETING? LIKE A RELIGIOUS ONE, RIGHT?
YUP! FOR THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN MELITA-SAMA OUR MEETINGS ARE VERY IMPORANT!
... OKAY, BUT ABOUT THAT, UH... MELI...

BUT SHE'S SUCH AN AMAZING FIGURE.
OH, TOO BAD...
Sigh...
WELL, I DON'T BELIEVE IN THOSE KINDS OF THINGS.
AN, NO! NOT AT ALL!
MELITA-SAMA! ARE YOU INTERESTED!?
IF YOU BELIEVE THAT ONE DAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LIVE HAPPILY IN THE KINGDOM OF STARS, THEN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE YOUR DAILY LIFE IN A BRIGHTER LIGHT TOO.
NO, TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING IS WONDERFUL.

DON'T YOU THINK SO TOO?
ACK! I THINK I JUST SAW SOMETHING REALLY WEIRD.
キラリン
I'M GONNA PASS MY COLLEGE EXAMS, GET A JOB AT A TOP CORPORATION, AND BECOME RICH. THEN I'LL BE HAPPY!
NO, I DON'T! HAPPINESS IS SOMETHING YOU'VE GOT TO GRAB HOLD OF BY YOURSELF.
ガタン ゴトン...
.....
...JEEZ, YOU'RE ANNOY-ING.
... CAN YOU REALLY BE HAPPY JUST BY BECOMING RICH?

YES?

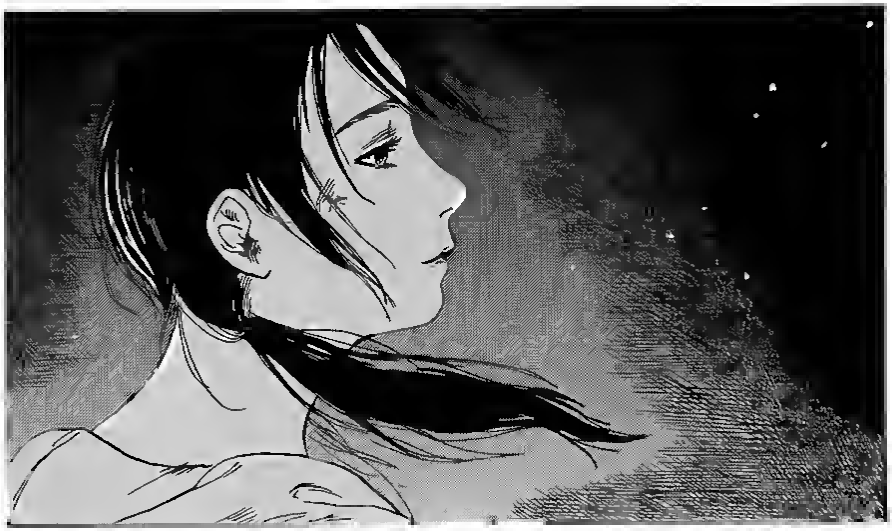
NAGANO-SAN...

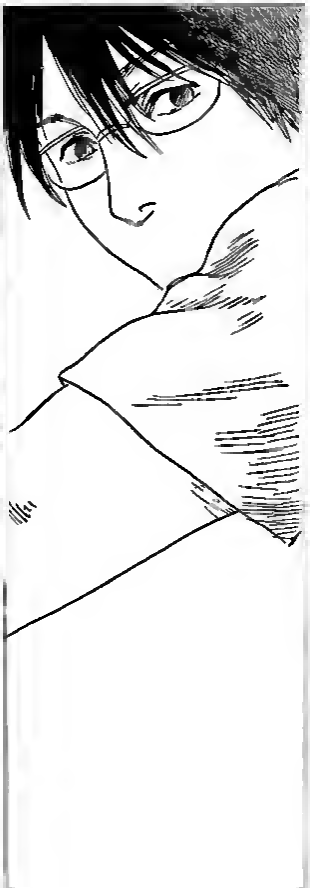
NO, I DON'T.
I KNEW IT!!

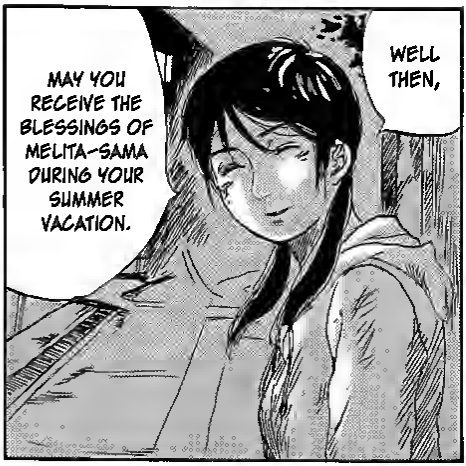
DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

IF YOU'RE GONNA BE TALKING TO ME.
WELL... LEARN IT.
MURATA...
IT'S MURATA TOSHIHIKO.
TOSHI...
KUN.
HIKO...
YES?

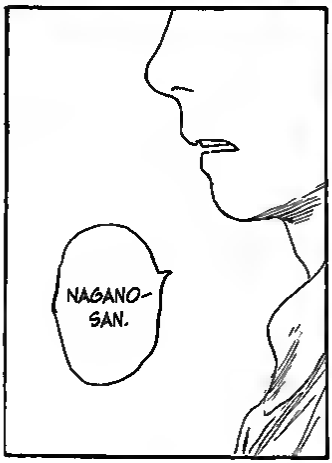
THE STARS ARE BEAUTIFUL, AREN'T THEY?






WELL THEN,
MAY YOU RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS OF MELITA-SAMA DURING YOUR SUMMER VACATION.

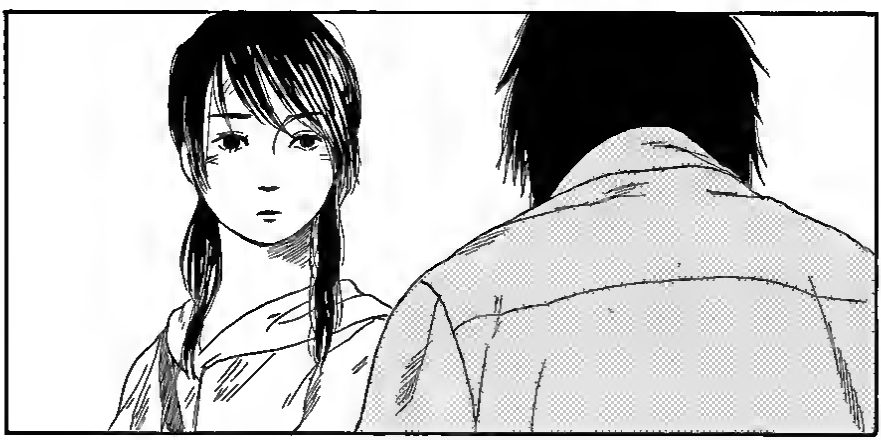
THANK YOU.
I'LL BE FINE.


NAGANO-SAN.

REALLY STRANGE IN THE HEAD.
YES?
NAGANO-SAN...
YOU'RE...
WHAT ARE YOU-
BUT-!
BUT, YOU KNOW, I...
I'VE ALWAYS...

LIKED THE VIEW FROM BEHIND,
OF THE NAPE OF THE NECK OF THAT GIRL WHO WAS STRANGE IN THE HEAD.

I LOVED IT...



OH?
THANK YOU.
WELL, THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME A RIDE HOME TODAY.
GOODNIGHT.

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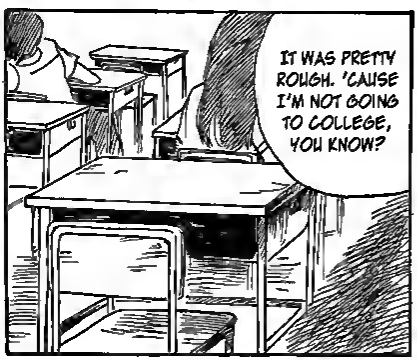
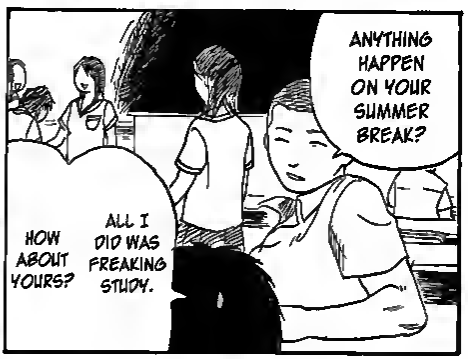
とぉっかい
MAN, THERE'S NO POINT IN HAVING SCHOOL ON SUCH A HOT DAY.
FOR REAL!

IT'S SO HOT...
YO MURATA! HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE-


IT WAS PRETTY ROUGH. 'CAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO COLLEGE, YOU KNOW?


ANYTHING HAPPEN ON YOUR SUMMER BREAK?
ALL I DID WAS FREAKING STUDY.
HOW ABOUT YOURS?

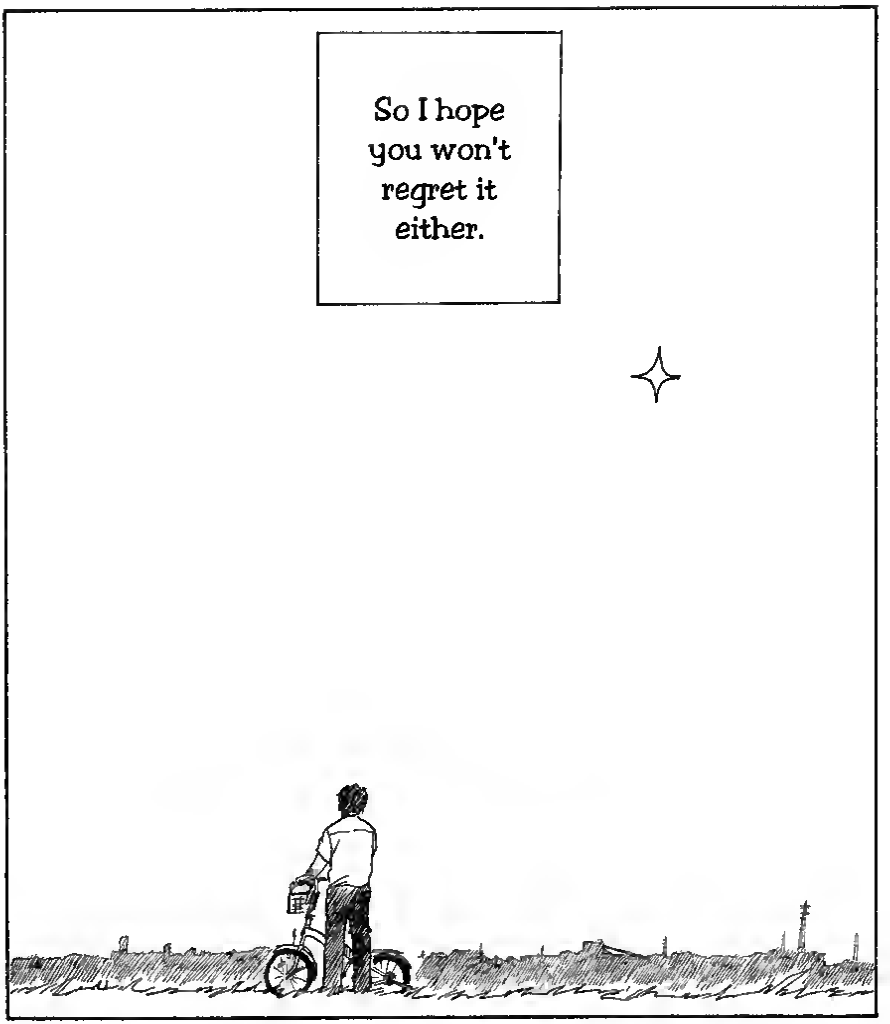
HEY, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT NAGANO-SAN?
EH?
W-WHAT?
. . . . . .
AROUND THE START OF SUMMER, HER WHOLE FAMILY WENT MISSING.
WELL, THAT'S WHAT I HEARD FROM MY MOM.
HER PARENTS GOT WAY DEEP INTO SOME RELIGION AND DUMPED ALL THIS MONEY INTO IT. SEEMS LIKE THEY RACKED UP QUITE A DEBT.

THAT'S A SHAME-
YOU LIKED NAGANO-SAN, RIGHT?
SHUT- NO WAY! THAT-
WOW...
IS THAT... WHAT HAP-PENED...
RELIGION IS, LIKE, SUPER FREAKY, HUH?
NEVER HAPPENED...

COME ON, PEOPLE, TAKE YOUR SEATS.
BLEH, IT'S THE TEACH.
WELL THEN, LET'S BEGIN HOMEROOM.
STAND UP.

The things I've done leading up to now, and the things that I'll do from now on.

I don't regret it.



You're in the kingdom of stars now, aren't you?

Fin